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Internet endangers the human right to express neutrality

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A moderately known social media user brought up indentured servitude not long after widespread fiery protests and demonstrations strengthening the Black Lives Matter movement, in response to George Floyd's brutal murder by Minneapolis police officer called Derek Chauvin, had grabbed the attention of a significant part of the globe. In the user's textual post, addressing the white people in denial of racism, he/she/they mentioned the indenture system, practiced in the 16th and 17th centuries by colonial ventures like the Virginia Company, under which European men, women, and children were voluntarily or involuntarily transported to British America to work their transatlantic voyage debts off as bonded labourers for plantation owners before African slave labour force gradually became predominant in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

To counter a number of comments by others calling the user out for what they perceived as an All Lives Matter stance, the user went on to share a few excerpts from *The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis* by David W. Galenson, revealing how the European servants were "treated like slaves", deprived of enough food, and overworked to the extent that some of them ran away to live with the Indians, and, upon being recaptured, the colony's authority "appointed" some of them "to be hanged Some burned Some to be broken upon wheles, others to be staked and Some to be shott to death."

Some users pointed out the striking differences between servitude and chattel slavery, such as the latter was unfathomably inhumane, life-long and inherited while the former, although not life-long, either irreparably devastated many of the white servants' health or resulted in their untimely deaths before they could be free from bound labour and collect their rewards.

Another user, referencing *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference* by Jenny Shaw, narrated how the colonial authorities, fearing uprisings against them as an outcome of the unity between their

white servants and black slaves, segregated the two by meting out certain privileges only to the European servants and their children. In a separate thread below the original post, to the apparent discontent of some concerned with not downgrading the gravity of slavery, a few others began discussing the lack of nutrition, sanitation facilities, and proper medical attention, paving the way for high disease and mortality rates, experienced by the deserving and undeserving overworked poor, including children, in the workhouses or poorhouses of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The comment section turned into a hotbed for prejudice and propaganda as anonymous users twisting the words of the post, whose clear purpose was to remind the racist supporters of “white pride” that their forefathers weren’t free from oppression by the race they now so proudly consider superior, gave it an interpretative nature.

How else would social media thrive without the attention-grabbing virtual conflicts among the uneducated, the well-read, and the corrupt under the cover of ‘democracy’? (<https://www.euronews.com/next/2021/10/04/facebook-profits-off-hate-and-that-s-why-it-won-t-change-says-whistleblower-frances-haugen>)

The design of the internet increasingly resembles the mindscape of a person with anxiety disorder. Apart from the voices echoing right and wrong information, now there’s another voice, belonging to the Artificial Intelligence, merging the right with the wrong to craft content that escalates mistrust and fear, giving only an illusion of truth. The use of bots in swaying public opinions to influence an election outcome is nothing new, but now we have social media accounts powered by Artificial Intelligence which, coupled with bots, has a far greater potential to spread propaganda and promote aggressive disputes among large sections of our society through well-constructed compelling lengthy textual posts. And there aren’t yet any software programs efficient enough to correctly detect posts written by Artificial Intelligence. (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-ai-bots-could-sabotage-2024-elections-around-the-world/>) For instance, social media posts on the ongoing conflicts in the world, are followed by a succession of comments, reinforcing the political bias of the respective news outlets, from unusual social media accounts – some deleted immediately after making a few inflammatory comments or posts, and some with no profile image or archived original content or a record of previous public interactions despite existing for years. Apparently these bot-run accounts initiate discourses on several social media platforms by spreading propaganda. (<https://theintercept.com/2022/12/20/twitter-dod-us-military-accounts/>)

Regarding the ongoing Russo-Ukraine war, social media accounts on the internet, gathering on pages of the various news sources and social media influencers, are divided. One group of accounts, armed with information dissipated by the dominant pro-Western pundits and media, sees a remarkably brave wartime leader in the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, supports Ukraine’s decision to join NATO, and condemns Russia for pressurising the Ukrainian leader to decide otherwise by invading Ukrainian territories. Another group, resounding some of the apolitical and left-leaning intellectuals’ and news sources’ explanations of the ongoing war,

denounces the Ukrainian President for downplaying the West's warning of an upcoming Russian invasion in the beginning of 2022 and prioritising not giving Russia an easy victory by not alarming the Ukrainian civilians to prepare themselves to survive the impending war as it would create "panic in the market, panic in the financial sector" and weaken the nation's military forces. They point out the roles played by the USA-funded organisations like the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) that has been operating in Ukraine by subsidizing the nation's "civil society groups, media outlets, and human rights defenders" even before its people declared independence, USAID, and tech camps not only in maintaining a "soft power" on Ukraine but also facilitating "regime changes" in favour of pro-American leadership. They also emphasize that NATO, whose dominant military spender is the United States, was warned many times against expanding into Eastern Europe as it would only unnecessarily provoke Russian aggression against its immediate neighbouring countries that the Western alliance was desperate to economically and politically peel away from Russia's orbit to include them as their members. They ask, why is NATO ever-expanding when the Warsaw Pact, a military alliance of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries created in response to NATO, has been long dissolved following the end of the Cold War? They also question the process of "deoligarchization" in Ukraine since the past decade. And then there are those accounts that spread unverified information, possibly falsehood, and jokes on the conflict.

Are all the three kinds of social media accounts run by human beings? Are some of them, either cheering for Russia or defending Ukraine, a part of a 'bot farm'? What about accounts claiming that they had been banned for asking why Russia is the most sanctioned nation who was banned from the Olympics this year when war crimes and other crimes against humanity committed by Israel and the United States are defended by the Western powers?

(https://www.reddit.com/r/AskARussian/comments/1eomhr3/what_do_you_feel_about_this_wok

Notwithstanding people on which side of the argument has got it all figured out correctly, everyone knows and understands that in matters of political or judicial turmoil the common human's interest is as protected as grass on a battlefield. The ongoing high-tech genocide in Gaza exposes our collective vulnerability as we witness how certain dominant developed countries can invest billions of dollars into wiping out a population deemed "sub-humans" by one of their common allies. War, whether it's rooted in self-defence or ethnic cleansing, is every civilian's enemy that can only be combatted if the politically powerless majority identify, respect, and unite on their common ground despite their differences in social statuses, religions, cultures, educational backgrounds, or opinions on anything. However, the effects of certain social media influencers and news outlets that are incentivised by hegemonic sponsors (https://thegeopolitics.com/politics-of-the-us-funding-and-situation-in-bangladesh/#google_vignette), unequal access to education and correct information, and different ways of engaging with available information or misinformation, render the masses' shared humanness latent.